



10 RECOMMENDATIONS

HOW TO MAKE INCLUDING SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Greet everyone and make them feel **welcome**

Create **structure and overview**

Support the **feeling of community**

Make sure that **everybody** feels like being a part of the practise

Meet the participants with **positive expectations**

Give **most love** to the **most annoying one**

Make it easy to do it right and to act right

Make sure that you **show interest** for every participant

Lots of **praise and acknowledgement**

Good intentions can have **unintended consequences**

Creating inclusive sports activities is very much a matter of creating an inclusive sports environment. An inclusive sports environment can be described as an environment where the child is not only present, but where the child also experiences belonging to and having value for the community. Here it is important that it is the child's experience that counts. Therefore, always be curious and attentive to the child's feedback, as it is your best tool to correct activities, the organization and your communication with the child.

The 10 recommendations should be seen as good focus areas that you can use in teaching to ensure that your teaching and interaction with the children supports the children in developing their self-confidence and self-esteem in a positive direction. In this way, you can support the children in increasing their future development opportunities.

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GREET EVERYONE AND MAKE THEM FEEL WELCOME

It's important that the participants have the feeling, that you are happy to see them and that they are being seen. **Practically you can:** Be in the door and receive every participant with a high five, a smile and say: "Good to see you again!"

CREATE STRUCTURE AND OVERVIEW

2

We all like to know what, when and how. It can sometimes seem overwhelming and hard to engage in something if you do not know what is happening afterwards. Therefore a simple overview of the practise can create (a feeling of) security and an opportunity for the participants to engage. **Practically you can:** Make a plan of the practise that you introduce to the participants in the beginning of the practise. Along the way you can go back to the plan and show the participants how far you have come: "Now we've come this far, and now we are going to..."

SUPPORT THE FEELING OF COMMUNITY

3

It's important for the participants both to feel that they belong to and that they are valued in the community. Make sure that it is clear to the participants that you are in this together and that everybody has value to the community. Also notice participants who return to the practise after absence and emphasize that it is good to see them again and that the community has missed them. Be aware if anyone feels outside of the community and support the feeling that there is room for diversity. **Practically you can:** Create a special high five, begin and end the practise in a circle to check-in and check-out. Also try to have a clear framework for the community which is easy to follow so that it will be easy to join and easy to be a part of the community. Create a good narrative about your specific community.

MAKE SURE EVERYBODY FEELS LIKE BEING A PART OF THE PRACTISE

It is important for the participants experience of being part of the community that the participant is able to participate. Sometimes participants will opt out of training. There can be several reasons for this, but no matter what the reason is it's important that you do not pressure them to participate, but only invite them and be curious towards what it would take for the participant to join. **Practically you can:** Do different variations of the exercises so that everyone can participate. If a participant cannot or will not participate in one exercise then consider alternative ways in which the participant can still contribute, e.g. as a helper or in another way, so that the participant still feels that the participants resources are important/necessary in the common activity.

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MEET THE PARTICIPANTS WITH POSITIVE EXPECTATIONS

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Your positive expectations towards a participant often affect on their ability in a positive way. It matters when we believe that the participants are able to do something. That goes for concrete exercises but it also goes for their behaviour in the room. Of course we quickly build up experiences with the participants, which means that we sometimes choose to intervene before the participant acts inappropriate. Of course intervening is necessary if the participants actions are dangerous, but show the participant that you have positive expectations by holding back the instinctive intervention. **Practically you can:** Articulate that you believe in the participants, their strengths and resources - and show them that they are progressing by making them aware of what they have already progressed that day. If the participants don't believe in themselves then ask clarifying questions to help them reflect on believing in themselves.

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GIVE MOST LOVE TO THE MOST ANNOYING ONE

A great tool is to give most love to the most annoying. First of all they often need it the most and secondly you show that there is room for everybody, which gives comfort and strengthens the relations between you and the entire group of the participants. Likewise be aware of who is considered problematic and make an effort that this will not be the general view. **Practically you can:** Try not to show irritation or anger towards the participant. Avoid using irony and sarcasm. Sometimes an annoying behaviour can be caused by a need for attention and care. Use this in a positive way e.g. by letting the participant help you show an exercise.

MAKE IT EASY TO DO IT RIGHT AND TO ACT RIGHT

Consider how you create structures and activities so that the behaviour, you wish from the participants is the easiest one for them to choose.

Practically you can: E.g. Stand with your back towards a corner when you give a message. In this way participants will not be disturbed by what is going on behind you. Also you can avoid that the participants fiddles with stuff if you don't leave it around. It is a matter of changing the settings and the activity rather than correcting the participants.

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MAKE SURE THAT YOU SHOW INTEREST FOR EVERY PARTICIPANT

Show interest for the children and treat them equally. Be aware if everybody feels noticed, met, understood and accepted. Here, you play an important role! Work on acknowledging the participants as whole human beings and not just whether they have a good or bad behaviour.

Practically you can: Show the participants that you want the best for them (they will notice). Remember that everyone is different and that everyone is extraordinary!

LOTS OF PRAISE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Make sure to focus the praise on the participant's participation and effort rather than on whether they do it right or wrong. Say: "Nice, that you are joining us" or "It is cool that you keep trying" and say it with sincerity. Of course it is okay to praise when something succeeds but make it clear to the participant that it was not just luck but that is was due to their ability and practice. Try to create an environment where participation and trying is more important than to do the right move. Confirm the participant's positive self image and disprove any negative self image. Have positive expectations to the participants as you support and encourage them - also when things are not going quite as they hoped for. **Practically you can:** Turn down competition elements and focus more on the development that each one has made. Make it clear to the participant that the participant has developed and progressed. They will not always notice it themselves so help them spot their own development, e.g. by saying: "Today I have seen you do xx".

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GOOD INTENTIONS CAN HAVE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

Last but not least it is good to be aware that good intentions can have unintended consequences. By that we mean that you can have designed and thought out everything down to the smallest detail but that it will not always go as you expected. A participant can react different to a well-intentioned comment or feel excluded even though you feel you have done everything you could to include the person. Here a good piece of advice can be that you as coaches evaluate with each other throughout the training. **Practically you can:** Think trough in advance how an activity can be changed if necessary. Often it can be helpful to return to something that is well known, e.g. a well-known game. Also, make sure to evaluate the activity in the end. What was planned, what happened and how did the participants react. Make a plan and a back up-plan and agree on what you will do if the good intentions you have show to have unintended consequences.

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Game

For some children it takes a little extra to have a good experience with sports and to be part of an active community. Based on more than 10 years of experience in organizing tailor-made sports activities for children and youth in vulnerable positions, GAME, in collaboration with sports didactic consultant Rune Erlangsen, has prepared 10 recommendations on how to create inclusive sports activities.